

## "Man is Born to Labor"

FRANCIS J. MARTIN

*From the Louisville "Record."*

ELEVEN centuries ago the mightiest ruler in the world was the Emperor Charlemagne. Traveling one day through a forest he found the holy hermit, Hutto, tools in hand, engaged in binding the faggots which he was cutting from the trees. Somewhat scornfully the monarch asked: "Father, is it thus you serve the Lord?" Without ceasing his toil, the monk replied: "Honest work is worship, crowned by Divine Love; he who does his appointed share is most pleasing to the Master, for to labor is to pray." Instructive, indeed, is this lesson, for the Christian spirit of joy and delight in labor has departed so completely from the world that the late Pope Benedict XV. declares disgust for work to be the fourth great plague of the age. Let us examine this plague which besets us, the causes which have produced it, and the means of acquiring that love for labor which animated the holy hermit, Hutto.

Must we not admire the Holy Father's precision in noting disgust for work as a scourge of our times? Evidence of constant toil greet us at every turn, so that none could truthfully say that laziness is a common vice of the twentieth century. The bustling streets, the shrieking whistles, the buzzing machines, the rumbling locomotives, all speak of hard and ceaseless labor going on in the world. In the morning the majority of men and women forsake their homes for the factory, the mill, the mine, the shop, the office, or the store. In the evening, worn and weary, they return to eat their bread in the sweat of their brow. Only parasites of society, like the scions of the wealthy or professional vagabonds, are idle, indolent, slothful. Never perhaps in human history has labor been more universal than now. But never has it been more shattering, more nerve-wrecking, more slavish than in our age and country; and this it is that explains the abnormal aversion, the su-

preme contempt for work, which our late Holy Father accounted as a plague on the world.

#### GROWING DISGUST FOR WORK

That men display no interest, manifest no earnestness, show no concern for the tasks assigned to them, that they hate and despise the occupations which furnish their means of livelihood, is too well known. Almost unanimous is the complaint of employers that employes perform their labors unwillingly, grudgingly, half-heartedly. Coming late in the morning they will not bestir themselves during the day unless they are watched. As soon as the foreman's back is turned they fool and waste their time, relax their efforts, slacken their speed. They look forward only to quitting time in the evening and to their envelope on pay-day. The advancement of the business, the reputation of the firm are farthest from their thoughts. Such are common complaints. Observers declare that with the shortest hours and the highest wages ever known there is an unmistakable loss of efficiency, and a decrease in both the quality and the quantity of the output. Nor do employers themselves have any more adequate idea than their workers of the dignity of labor. Many of them abhor work so much that they even hold the workers in contempt, and they are constantly looking forward to the time when they will "retire." Indeed, so great is the aversion of men to the very thought of labor that they dream of Heaven as a place and state of rest, of sweet do-nothing.

The contrast between thirst for pleasure and abhorrence for work reveals the bent of many minds. They are intensely interested in recreations; they plan excursions months in advance, leaving no detail to chance or caprice; they talk, read and think about various forms of diversion. What taxes the strength more than athletics, or dancing? Yet the young will devote hours to either, without the least murmur of complaint. How differently do they regard their work! During free hours they dismiss it from their thoughts as a frightful dream; they never speak of it save to grumble and lament; they would abandon it altogether if it did not afford money for supplying their wants. They need no second invitation to attend a dance or a theater, but their mothers must prod them again and again to

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arouse them for their daily toil. This avidity for pleasure is not only a sign, but it is also an explanation of that thorough hatred for work which we observe among both young and old.

What has taken the joy and delight out of work? Without dwelling upon the loss of Christian principles and our innate inclination to seek the easiest way, we may trace some of the blame to the schools in which modern methods of training have substituted games for study, play for class. Thus negligence in performing tasks, carelessness in reciting lessons, have displaced serious preparation for fighting the hard battles of life. In high schools and colleges professors actually foster aversion for difficulties and hardships by allowing each pupil to choose the branches which he will follow, instead of prescribing a course of study for all. Besides, the successful athlete, and the coldness, even contempt, shown for the steady "plugger," engenders a spirit of disgust for studious effort. When exercises and games are emphasized, classes and games are slighted, the young quickly conceive reluctance for earnest, energetic and serious application.

#### NO INTEREST IN THEIR WORK

For the masses of workers the changed character of industry during the past century has taken the joy and pleasure from labor. Before the advent of the ubiquitous machine they took personal interest and an honest pride in their occupations. Then articles of clothing, tools and implements were produced almost in their entirety by the individual craftsman. He threw himself heart and soul into his endeavors, strove to impress his personality, to imprint his image on his work. He exacted special pains to make it his own, going over it again and again to improve its appearance. The cobbler saw in his shoes, the tailor in his clothes, the artisan in his watches, clocks and knives the reflection of his brain, the child, mayhap, of his genius. This incentive to work is gone. The world has become a vast machine and scarcely one article is produced in its entirety by one hand. When it is completed no one can have the happiness of pointing to it and claiming it as his own. Visit an automobile plant and observe how little each worker contributes to the whole. A machine

can have no interest or pride in the work done by it: no more can a man when he is required to function as a machine, or merely a cog in a wheel.

Look at the difference in your attitude toward your daily occupation and your hobbies or extra employments. A laundress does not exult in the clothes that are cleaned by a machine she operates, but she rejoices in the cake that she has baked. A machinist does not glow over a monster of iron and steel in which he has fastened a few rivets, but he eagerly displays the kite or trinket that he has made for his children. When the toiler has lost personal pride in his labor, when he cannot truly say of any article on which he spends his toil, "this is my handiwork," all the heart is taken out of the thing and in this perverted order of nature it is natural for him to hate, despise, perhaps curse the ceaseless grind of work.

The manifest injustice in modern industry, the social and economic order as it is called, has contributed the largest share to this disgust for work. "By degrees it has come to pass," says Pope Leo XIII., "that workingmen have been surrendered all isolated and helpless to the hardheartedness of employers and the greed of unchecked competition: a small number of very rich men have been able to lay on the masses of the laboring poor a yoke little better than slavery itself." The magnate very often has less concern for the health and morals of his employes than for the fire protection of the building in which they work. He finds it easier and less expensive to replace a worker than a machine. Having little sympathy with their wants, privations and hardships, he aims to obtain the greatest margin of profit at the smallest possible expense. Today he donates millions for public libraries or universities, tomorrow he raises the price of oil, increases the cost of living and invokes the strong arm of the law to maintain starvation wages.

While the worker is perspiring or freezing at his task, the owner is rolling in the lap of luxury, spending the winters in Florida and the summers at the seashore, his children figuring in one sensational escapade after another. The worker, reflecting that all these joys of life are purchased at the expense of his flesh and blood, that his family

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finds it difficult to eke out bare existence while others frolic on the fruit of his toil, is disgusted with the hardships that he must bear. This indifference of the employer toward the employe, this sharp contrast between the wealth of the magnate and the poverty of the toiler, has sown the seeds of that discontent and strife which culminates in strikes, destruction of property, financial, physical and moral ruin.

#### LABOR'S CHRISTIAN IDEAL

Having exposed the causes which furnish the basis for animosity in industrial relations, we now propose to suggest practical directions for the individuals. Neither you nor I can correct the abuses which capitalism has inflicted upon the world; few perhaps would willingly exchange the comforts of the present day for the inconveniences of the past. The capitalists, like the rich man in the Gospel, must be left to the judgment of God. Yet by emphasizing the Christian ideal of labor, we help you to solve personal difficulties, we can inspire you with motives that will teach you the value and the necessity of work. Since a man cannot eat unless he works, it is far better for him to love than to hate the occupation in which he engages.

Does not God, to whose image and likeness you have been created, set you an example of constant toil? "My Father worketh until now," said Our Lord, and commenting on these words, St. Augustine observes: "There are some who imagine that the world alone was made by God, that all things else were made by the world according to His ordinances and commands, but that God Himself does no work. Against this we offer the sentence of the Lord: 'My Father worketh until now!' Let us therefore believe and if possible understand that were God to withdraw His concurrence, all things would fall to pieces." Nothing is more foolish than to overlook the activities of Divine Providence, to picture God as an idler in Heaven. By work therefore you reproduce on earth one phase of that image and likeness to which you have been created.

God never intended that man should lead a slothful existence on earth. After creating Adam He placed him in the Garden of Paradise to dress and to keep it. By the fall of our first parents this duty was changed into a penance, this occupation was transformed into a burden.

"Because thou hast eaten of the tree whereof I commanded that thou shouldst not eat, cursed is the earth in thy work: with labor and toil shalt thou eat thereof all the days of thy life. In the sweat of thy face thou shalt eat thy bread." Work is in consequence such an inexorable law of human existence that St. Paul says: "If any man will not work, neither let him eat." It is so closely connected with human life that Job declares: "Man is born to labor." For this purpose our hands and our brains have been given to us; in one way or the other we must work to conform to God's designs, to satisfy for our sins.

#### OUR LORD'S EXAMPLE

Adam indeed accepted his lot in a spirit of penance, but during the curse of ages the ideal of duty and reparation was perverted; labor, particularly manual labor, was deemed degrading for men, fit only for women and slaves. Our Blessed Lord, however, restored all things to the high plane which God had intended in the beginning. By personal example He showed the dignity of labor: His foster-father was a carpenter, He Himself worked at the same trade. During His public life His enemies asked: "Is not this the carpenter's son?" Since He has pointed out the way for us, we should follow in His footsteps and work cheerfully and contentedly at our appointed tasks. As the Angel said to Peter: "What God hath made clean, do not thou call common." So may we say to you: "What the Son of God has sanctified and ennobled, do not thou hate and despise."

Has not work itself a priceless value that we should esteem? Usually we measure its worth in dollars and cents, which is meet and just, since the laborer is worthy of his hire, yet this is merely one of its advantages. When we are engaged in useful occupation, time does not hang heavy on our hands. Imagine how wearily the days would pass if we had nothing to engage our attention. Manual labor brings into play all the forces of the body, affords an outlet for nervous energy, strengthens the muscles, exercises the senses, develops all our physical powers. Mental labor aids the memory, trains the mind to correct thinking, expands the innate qualities of the intelligence. In fine, work stamps its character upon us, teaches us the

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realities of life, makes us men in the full meaning of the word. Humanly speaking, these are excellent reasons for joy and pleasure in work, not dislike and disgust for it. These natural benefits of work are far surpassed, however, by the opportunities which it affords for spiritual progress. There is no stronger safeguard against sin than work. Ezechiel thus describes the stages which lead to the destruction of Sodom: "Behold this was the iniquity of Sodom, thy sister, fulness of bread and abundance and the idleness of her and her daughters." Laziness and sloth contributed to the downfall of that wicked city. David served God faithfully as long as he worked, but indulging in repose he fell into the horrible crimes of adultery and murder. A brief examination of conscience will disclose that if you were not occupied with labor and toil, you would constantly commit sin, for seldom do you violate the law of God save in idle hours or vacations. Ever true are the words of Holy Writ: "Idleness hath taught much evil and whosoever pursueth idleness is very foolish." How happy indeed for you to regard work not as a drudgery or slavery, but as a shield against temptation and sin.

### LABOR IS HOLY

Besides protecting you against danger your work can be supernaturalized; it can help you to lay up treasure for Heaven. Some imagine that only the labor of priests and nuns can give glory to God, but you must dispel this false notion. Since every one has his proper gift from God, since those only should aspire to the priestly state who have been called by God as Aaron was, you are unjust to God if you regard Him as looking with favor on the daily toil of none save those who follow the noblest calling. No matter how humble, how insignificant, how mean may be your employment, you may consecrate it to God, for St. Peter tells us: "If any man speak, let him speak as the words of God. If any man minister let him do it as of the power which God administereth: that in all things God may be honored through Jesus Christ." You have not time during the day for numerous vocal prayers, yet if you follow the exhortation of St. Francis de Sales: "In this world we must pray by work and action," you can make

your daily toil one constant prayer. It is easier, perhaps, to kneel in church for a few moments—indeed, we exhort all who can to pay a daily visit to the Blessed Sacrament—yet fidelity to your occupations is a most acceptable prayer to God. Every morning renew your good resolutions, dedicate your day to God, offer up for His honor and glory your toil and labor. Thus your occupation will not only offer you a means of livelihood, but it will also afford you multiplied opportunities for increasing your glory and reward in the life to come. Whenever the difficulty, the monotony and the weariness of the daily grind tend to disgust you with work, derive inspiration and support from the words of St. Paul: "For I reckon that the sufferings of this time are not worthy to be compared with the glory of the life to come that shall be revealed in us." Perhaps you seldom realize how much you may please God, how greatly you may benefit your soul by performing your daily tasks with supernatural motives.

Engaged in fatiguing, exhausting and distasteful work, you have a most excellent opportunity of practising mortification and of imitating Jesus Christ. As your labors will not permit you to observe rigorous fasts, you may wonder how you can comply with the warning: "Unless you do penance, you shall all likewise perish." As the days of martyrdom are gone and no one is leading you to execution for the Faith, you may be puzzled by the admonition: "If any one will come after Me, let him deny himself, take up his cross and follow Me." It is not a cross of wood which Our Lord wishes you to carry, the severe penances of the anchorites in the desert which He urges you to attempt; it is the daily grind in shop, mill, factory, or store, that He has assigned as your penance and your cross. Bearing patiently the trials and hardships which your labor imposes, performing your daily tasks in a spirit of mortification, you can constantly bring forth fruits worthy of penance; you can continually take up your cross and follow Jesus Christ.



## The Foundations of the Catechism

ERNEST R. HULL, S.J.

*The Bombay "Examiner"*

**W**HAT we have to begin with, and to secure before everything else, is more or less as follows: The first foundation—God is our maker, keeper, master, ruler and loving father. He is great and wonderful, and we must reverence Him and love Him and obey Him.

To obey Him is doing right, and then we are good; to disobey Him is doing wrong, and then we are bad. Doing wrong is called sin. Goodness is very pleasing to God, so that if we are good He will reward us in heaven when we die. Sin is very displeasing to God, so that if we are wicked He will punish us in hell when we die.

In order to reverence and love God we must say our prayers well, and be good in church. In order to keep good we must pray to God for help. If we do anything wrong we must tell God we are sorry and will not do it again, and pray Him to forgive us. Afterwards this will be done in confession.

The second foundation—God made man good, but he soon fell into sin, and his children also became sinful. God was very displeased, and would not let any one into heaven, even those that were good. But after a time God came down from heaven and became a man without ceasing to be God. This was Jesus Christ who lived 1900 years ago. He showed us how to be good by teaching and example. Then He was killed by wicked men. When Jesus died He took on Himself the punishment for sin which we deserved. In this way He saved us from hell, and gave us grace to make us strong against sin. He also opened heaven to us once more, if we would love Him, and try to live like Him, and keep out of sin.

In order to give us grace the Holy Spirit of God comes down into our souls and puts it there. When we sin, grace is taken away from us. Now we know God in three ways. As our Creator and Master He is called the Father; as saving us from sin He is called the Son; as giving us grace He is called the Holy Spirit. It is the same one God who does all these three things. So when we love or pray

to the Father, or to Jesus or to the Holy Spirit, we are praying to the one same God, even though there is a difference between all three.

### THE THIRD FOUNDATION

After Jesus had taught us how to live He made the Church. He picked out twelve men called Apostles who were to rule the Church, and to teach all men what Jesus had taught, and make them Christians by Baptism. When the Apostles died the Pope took the place of St. Peter who was the head, and the Bishops took the place of the other Apostles. The Pope and Bishops went on all the time ruling the Church and teaching all mankind and making Christians by Baptism. Priests were also made, to teach and take care of the people. The Church teaches just what God wants us to know, and we must believe it because Jesus taught it to the Church, and we know that it is true.

By being baptised we belong to the Church; and in Baptism we get grace to believe what the Church teaches, and to obey God and the Church, and to keep good all our lives.

The fourth foundation.—The Church teaches us what God has commanded us to do, and not to do. When we feel tempted to anything wrong, the voice of God inside our mind tells us that it is wrong; and if we do it, we feel in a bad state, and cannot be happy till we have told God we are sorry and asked Him to forgive us.

These are some of the things we must do or not do: We must think of God sometimes, and love Him, and thank Him for being good to us, and must ask Him to help us to be good. This we do when we say our night and morning prayers, and when we go to church. We must go to Mass on Sundays, and behave well, and pray when we are there. In the Mass Jesus comes down onto the altar, though we cannot see Him, and is quite near us, and gives us grace when we pray to Him there. We should also go to Benediction, for Jesus is there hidden in the monstrance, and gives us His blessing.

We must honor and obey our parents, because God has given them to us to love us and take care of us. We must not give way to anger, or hate anybody, or quarrel,

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or fight, or hurt other people, or say nasty things against them. If we ever do so, we must tell them we are sorry and beg their pardon.

We must not steal anything that belongs to our parents or to other people. If we do so we must give it back, or at least confess it. We must not spoil or break other people's things.

[Nothing should be said about purity except that children are taught to dress properly, and checked when they need it. The way in which the correction is done (by looking shocked) creates the instinct of modesty, though the reasons are not understood.]

We must tell the truth, and not tell lies, or try to deceive anybody, especially our parents. We must not *wish* for other people's things, for that may tempt us to steal them. In fact, it is not only wicked to *do* wrong things, but wicked to *wish* to do them, or take pleasure in thinking of them.

At night prayers we should think whether we have done anything wrong; and if we have, tell God we are sorry, and ask Him to forgive us, and promise Him to try not to do it again.

The fifth foundation.—Besides making man, God made the Angels in Heaven. Some of the Angels disobeyed God and became wicked, and God put them to suffer in hell forever. The Good Angels love us and pray for us and help us to be good. One Angel is set apart to look after each child; and you should remember this, and ask your Guardian Angel to help you when tempted to sin.

The Bad Angels try to do us harm, especially Satan, who is the worst of them. He tries to put wicked thoughts and wishes into us, and stir up wicked feelings, and thus lead us to sin. We must hate the devil, and get rid of all the bad thoughts and feelings he stirs up in us, and ask God to help us against him.

Good people when they die go to Heaven, where the Angels are. We call them Saints and Blessed. They are our friends, and pray for us; and we ought to love them and ask them to pray more for us. The greatest of the good people in Heaven is Our Lady Mary, the Mother of Jesus. Then there is St. Joseph, her husband,

and the Apostles, and many great Saints whose stories are written in books.

Wicked people, if they die without being sorry for sin and without God's pardon, go to suffer punishment in hell with the devil forever. Many people are good enough to go to Heaven, but still they have many faults and little sins. These do not go to Heaven at once, but are kept for a time in another place, suffering punishment till they are made clean. Then at last they also go to Heaven. We ought to have pity on these souls, and pray to God for them, that they may get to Heaven sooner.

#### METHOD OF TEACHING

The above program has been merely sketched out, and not carefully matured. It is meant only to convey an idea and a plan. Broadly speaking, we should consider a child extremely well-equipped if he realized it all.

It is all very simple and quite easy to realize, if we tell it to the child just like telling him fairy tales. Of course, it ought to be illustrated by pious stories. Only let them be sound and healthy ones, with no nonsense of exaggeration or false impressions—faults from which pious stories are not always free. It is easy to put a child's mind on wrong lines by an ill-chosen story, and sometimes with disastrous effects afterwards, when the child begins to reflect.

But the process should be aided by books—something of the "Royal Reader" kind, in large print, and suitable pictures. Here again care should be taken over pictures. They should not be done in a cheap way, but be large, clear, well-colored ones, free from all the faults of extravagance and unreality which vitiate so much of our so-called religious art.

Pictures of God the Father creating the world are bad art—with all respect to Raphael and the great masters; and they are subversive from a religious point of view. We tell the child that God has no body, and yet here He is shown with a body. He has no beginning nor end, and yet He has by this time grown old. The child-mind may materialize God, but we need not confirm its materialization. Of course where God appeared to men one can represent Him this way, and explain that He took such a shape. The same with Angels. They have no body,

but they took some shape like that. The creation pictures should be natural scenes of a rugged dark world, the light dawning, the sea and land and sky, the plants, animals and man, and so on, just to make the lesson vivid. Pictures of persons should be dignified. It is positively hurtful to depict Christ as the ugly and maudlin object He is often represented. Common-sense and elemental good taste should control everything; always with one object before our mind: to make real the truths of religion, fix them in the memory, and convey the right impression.

The Bible is, among the Catholic laity, I am sorry to say, a sadly neglected book. Perhaps a reaction against Protestantism may explain it; but, after all, the Bible is the Word of God, and written for our instruction; and although not meant for a theological treatise, it is in many parts the best kind of instruction. Bible histories usually embody portions of its text; but there is no reason in the world why selected passages from the Bible should not be read to the children as an accompaniment to the foundation course. Recondite passages, of course, will be left out. I would reserve the Creation account to the upper classes, when its puzzling parts can be explained. But the story of Adam and Eve, omitting some verses here and there, cannot be surpassed. The same with selected passages throughout the Old Testament which, being read from the book, would introduce to the children the idea of using the Bible afterwards. The Gospels should be freely read. Nothing conveys such a picture of the character of Christ, or implants so deep an impression of His personality. . . .

#### THE TYPICAL DOMINIE

I am merely stating what has become proverbial—we all know the portrait of the typical Dominie. It is the mentality of the Pharisee without his moral crookedness; a punctilious devotion to method, not in its true sense as an adjustable adaptation of means to ends, but in the false sense of a rigid traditional routine which is as sacred as the letter of the old covenant was to the Pharisees, and as unchangeable as the laws of the Medes and Persians. Their motto practically is "Whatever is new is not true." At the sight of new wine they take it for granted, without

tasting it, that the old is better. Encroach one iota on their ancient preserves, and they think the whole edifice of education is threatened. They remind one of the average orthodox Hindu, who, when asked why he believes this or does that, has only one answer: "Our fathers did it before us, and we do the same."

Of course this scathing indictment does not apply to *all* who are engaged in education. Far from it. In most there is *some* elasticity, in many as much elasticity as might be desired. But even among these I have seen enlightened men, thoroughly dissatisfied with the prevailing system, exhibiting an almost morbid timidity when it was a question of taking upon themselves the responsibility for any new departure, no matter how clearly an improvement. They feared resistance; they feared opposition; they feared condemnation from their compeers, whose voices, supported by the inertia of long tradition, were almost sure to prevail against them.

Those amenable to improvement will probably say: "Tell us how we can put it into effect, and we will start at once. But see the hundred and one difficulties in the way. A clever and well-informed parent could do it; but how many parents are clever and well-informed? As regards school, a clever and well-informed teacher might do it; but the ordinary run of teachers are humdrum people, who can only follow the wooden method of the catechism. Unless they have a fixed quantity of matter they will do nothing but talk round the subject. Unless there is some definite test like lesson by heart we have no check on their work," etc.

### THE PRIMARY SCHOOLS

There is another difficulty: "Even if such an informal course could be fitted into the lower classes of a high school, what about the primary schools? After four years the pupils go out of our hands, and depend for the rest of their life on what they learned then. For such children we have to cover the whole ground of what an adult Catholic ought to know, and the foundation course you propose is not enough for this."

It is a practical difficulty, but not so great as the difficulty which attends the other system. If you attempt to

stuff into the primary-school child the whole of the catechism you are undertaking a task of monumental futility—monumental because the futility pervades the whole structure from foundation to roof.

It is futile both in its beginning and in its end. It is absurdity super-imposed upon absurdity, and reminds us of Kant's grotesque image of "one man milking a he-goat while another holds the sieve." It is futile in its beginnings, for in the time given to the lesson you will never succeed in getting "all that an adult Catholic ought to know" into the head of a small child. The child will only understand and remember those parts which concern child-life, and those are more or less what I have included in the five foundations. Secondly, if attention were confined to those foundations, with a little extension, the child would have a chance of really learning something which would stick; but if you try to shove in whole sacks full of further knowledge contained in the full catechism, you will only choke the child. Out of the undigested mass it will retain nothing at all. Essentials and accessories will alike be lost. Consequently a complete failure will result. The child leaves school dyspeptic and debilitated, and after gradually getting relieved of its fulness, becomes an empty void; and what is worse, without the least appetite to fill it afterwards.

If a primary school could succeed in turning out its pupils with a full and vivid realization of the simple truth contained in the informal course just described, we should have every reason to congratulate that school on its success, and should not feel the least temptation to blame it for not doing more. Let us therefore seize the substance which is sure, and disregard the shadow, which is fleeting and precarious.

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## The World's Need of Christ

*From the "Catholic Herald of India"*

NOT so long ago the writer, turning over the pages of a magazine in a public library, was astounded by an article therein by an American Anglican Bishop, on what that prelate was pleased to call the "Failure of

Christianity." He seemed to have arrived at this very extraordinary conclusion from a survey of the evils abounding in the world, vice with upraised head stalking through the land, strikes in the industries, paralyzing trade, and the result: poverty and suffering everywhere. No doubt the economic troubles of the day are great. But in every age of the world's history, even amid the greatest prosperity, there were great economic troubles pressing hard on the poorer sections of the nations, just as we find today amid the economic troubles sharpers, agitators, who by preaching sedition, profiteering, or other nefarious means, have amassed a considerable fortune. But to say that, because of the economic troubles and the vices of the times, Christianity is a failure, is a fallacy of the first order. For the fact is that social and economic troubles arise from the ill-adjustment of things, precisely because the teachings of Christianity are set at nought and men legislate without Christ. Christianity inculcates virtue, and when Christian principles are jettisoned, vice is the resultant. Similarly, Christian Socialism, as explained in the immortal Encyclical of Pope Leo XIII., *Rerum Novarum*, is discarded, an anti-Christian and pagan Socialism comes in, and then ensue riots, revolutions, and what not.

If Christianity be a failure, of what creed is the Anglican Bishop a minister? Protestantism is indeed a failure, for it is a negation of the truth revealed by Christ Himself and taught by the Church He founded, and it cannot hold together and keep itself. The very attempt of Protestantism to appropriate to itself the term Catholic shows how ashamed it is of the Lutheran revolt. All the social evils of the day are the logical outcome of Protestantism, and all the troubles which have appalled the prelate are to be found in the bosom of Protestantism. They are, indeed, for the most part outside the Catholic Church. It was a saying of Joseph De Maistre that the Catholic Church is as Noah's Ark floating in turbid waters, sin and iniquity all around it, but not touching those within. We do not insinuate that the Catholic Church is the Congregation of the just only; alas no, we ourselves are conscious of being very far from its ideals. But in acts of parliaments, in the universities, in science, the religion of Christ



is thought to have no concern; in the libraries you may read Homer, Cicero, Spencer, Darwin, even attacks on Christianity; but you may not study Christ or His religion. In the universities you learn anthropology, biology, but these have nothing to do with Christianity; they are taught in a way which rather destroys Christianity. A student of medicine inevitably comes up against difficult philosophical theories of life and soul, and delicate ethical problems concerning physiological functions and pre-natal life, and from all this the Christian message is carefully and legally excluded, and so Christianity has very little or nothing to do with actual, everyday life. Faith becomes as an excrescence remaining organically distinct.

#### CHRISTIANITY MISUNDERSTOOD

But find, if you can, a more radical misconception of the place of Christianity in human history and life. Christ and His revelation are not a collection of convictions added to life and subtractible without in the least affecting our outlook on life. The fundamental fact of our very existence postulates our need of Christ, and because we lack this consciousness of our need we fail to appreciate the place of religion in our lives. Christianity is inextricably intertwined with all that is best and noblest in life, organically connected with our culture, our philosophy, our civilization. From us individually, or from humanity as a whole, belief in Christ could not be uprooted without irremediable intellectual and moral disaster.

It is a fact of history, a fact we are apt to overlook, that it is only by means of Christ and His revelation that men can live in truth and virtue. The very completeness of the result blinds us as to the process. It is to Christianity that we owe our belief in God, in immortality, in human personality, our ethical and cultured ideals. It is to Christianity that the world at large owes its greatest heroes, the preservation of the arts and learning, in a word, all that is best in it. Christianity lights up every nook and cranny of life, it purifies human reason, and ennobles the will. "Hence," says St. Paul, "if anyone is in Christ, he is a new being." And Christ Himself said: "Without Me you can do nothing," and "No man cometh to the Father but through Me," For every act of ours we need Christ

—terrible thought—we need His concurrence even for sin. Herein lies the essential malice of sin—that we use His concurrence to offend Him.

There is a vast difference between logical probability and real conviction, between the potentiality of reason and its exercise. All the geometrical problems of Euclid existed long before him, and yet no one saw them until he had proved them. The actualization of reason is dependent on contingent facts of education, character, training, etc. What is true of one science is truer of ethics and religion. One who leads a loose, careless life cannot perceive the beauty of virtue; one sunk in material pursuits feels no yearning after God, indeed finds it hard to realize His existence, His goodness. And as in the case of physical sight, the gradations between perfect sight and total blindness are innumerable, so too in that of the soul-sight, intellect and reason, it varies enormously in individuals. One of the functions of faith is to clarify the vision of the soul. Faith is no more the enemy of reason than spectacles are of sight.

#### THE HOPELESS WORLD

"Brethren," St. Paul says, "we will not have you ignorant concerning them that sleep, so that you may not grieve like the rest that have no hope." It is true today that the rest, *i.e.*, non-Christians, those who have rejected the Christian message, have no hope of immortality. Explain it as you like, but proofs have been accumulating in men's minds for two thousands years and more, that they are unable to grip and convince themselves. If philosophy and science, apart from religion and grace, cannot in the mass of mankind substantiate belief in immortality and in the validity of ethical principles, then the continuance of the higher elements of civilization is absolutely dependent on Christianity. For no one conversant with human realities will deny that the loss of such belief would mean an enormous strengthening of what is material and brutal at the expense of all the finer and spiritual factors in life.

Sidgwick, Bain, Mill, Huxley, amid their flounderings, confess the inadequacy of natural reason and the world's

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debt to Christ. The only social ideal that will work effectively, that does work effectively, is the Christian ideal. What else can secure the principle of adequately conferring on life a value commensurate with its sufferings, or can reconcile society and the individual, labor and capital? Where outside of Christianity is there a sure grip of social problems? Family life, the rights of the unborn, the claims of the weakly, the regeneration of the sinner—their only champion is Christ. There never will be any mechanism whereby sin and suffering can be eliminated. How are high motives, self-sacrifice, good-will to be generated; what can create clean hearts and right spirits in men and women? Not laws or leagues, nor resolutions or constitutions, but Christ alone. Verily is our need of Him great, the human soul needs to be personally united to the person of Christ. We need Him every moment of our lives. Yes, we do need Him. For without Him we can do nothing absolutely. Christianity is not a failure. It is yet a living and energizing force, making heroes and saints of poor, fragile men and women; every day it is doing wonders, confounding the wisdom, the pride, the strength of the world.

## Pius XI and the Genoa Conference

THE keen desire by which We are animated to see established in the world a new peace which does not merely consist in a cessation of hostilities, but principally in spiritual reconciliation, causes Us to follow with solicitous attention—in fact with anxious trepidation—the work of the Genoa Conference.

We have already invited Our faithful people to invoke with fervent prayer the benedictions of God on this Conference. We cannot hide the intense satisfaction We feel at seeing removed, thanks to the good-will of all, the serious obstacles which from the very beginning seemed to make the possibility of agreement remote.

Nobody, in fact, can doubt that the happy issue of such a great assemblage, which includes representatives of all the civilized nations, will mark a historical date for Chris-

tian civilization, especially in Europe, the people of which have suffered so much in past conflicts and through its recent and most deplorable consequences, and rightly desire that through the agency of the Conference the danger of new conflagrations shall be removed as far as possible.

May full attainment at least prepare the basis for the future and not far-distant advent of a new era of peace, of which one may say, with the Bible, that justice and peace have joined, remembering that the exigencies of justice must be tempered with charity.

Such a return to the normal state of human relations in its essential elements, in conformity with the dictates of reason, which is also the Divine command, will work greatly to the advantage of both conquerors and conquered, but especially to the advantage of those unhappy populations of Eastern Europe which, already laid waste by war, by internecine struggles, and by religious persecutions, are now in addition decimated by famine and epidemics, while they embrace in their territory so many sources of wealth that they might be strong elements in social restoration.

May Our word of compassion and comfort, together with that of Our lamented Predecessor, reach these populations, though they are divided from our Communion by an ancient difference, and may these unhappy populations also receive the ardent desire of Our paternal heart to see them enjoy, together with Us, the same gifts of humility and peace which are expressed by common participation in the Holy Mysteries.

And if by the height of misadventure, even in this Conference, the attempts of sincere pacification and lasting agreement should fail, who can think without trepidation how much the condition of Europe, already so deplorable and threatening, would be aggravated with the prospect of continually increasing suffering and the danger of a conflagration which would involve in its ruins all Christian civilization?